



ARMY AIR FORCES BASIC FLYING SCHOOL
GOODFELLOW FIELD, TEXAS

Saturday Afternoon

Aug. 22, 1942

Well, - Here starts - Hello! -

Don't know how long before the next formation cause today is an off day - that is, no ground school, - but there will be something cooking, never fear! -

We had our flying this morning, so our real work for the day is over. This being Saturday everyone is in the best of spirits cause unless someone ~~throws~~ a wrench in the machinery, "open post" will be declared within a few hours. It won't be for all night - that's only for "upper classmen" but - well - we won't argue over a few hours once a week.

Boy, oh, boy, - is our flying a mess, now. We fly solo for a period, take link training for another one, and then fly another period "under the hood" - all, one after the other. - In primary, they took all the instruments out of the plane so we could learn to fly by feel, and now, - they make us go under a hood so we can't see and fly entirely by instruments! - Oh me! And take it from me that they know what they're talking about when they say, "when flying under the hood - I rely entirely on your instruments and forget every sense of feel!"

Yesterday for instance, after flying under the hood for a half hour or so, all my instruments indicated I was in a right turn and going down - while "feel" told me I was flying straight + level. It's a funny thing in a case like this - you know you should do such and such to correct the plane's position, and you even go thru all the actual movements but you don't move a thing. - If your sense of feel tells you it's wrong - well you just sit there - one set of muscles exerting a pressure and another set absorbing it and the controls remaining as they were - not moving a fraction. You have to look down and give 'em a jerk that you can see, to break yourself! - Hell, to get back to my story - my instruments indicated a right turn - and losing altitude, while I sat there trying my best to move the controls against all my feelings which said we were level. - After so long a time, my instructor told me to come out from under the hood and see what I was actually doing. - When I did and saw - a "Judas Priest" slipped out before I could stop it, and the inst., who was of course watching for my reactions, had to laugh. - Here I was in a turn, with one wing down, of course, and diving at the ground at nearly 150 miles an hour! - That was when my feelings told me I was going level! - Hell. - I'll believe the instruments from now on! - Don't get worried, tho', he is out where he can see and we still had about 3000 ft. to go! He practice all of it in the "link trainer" but it's a little different when in

an actual plane. ²

— Sunday P.M. —

We just got thru with our main inspection of the week and "open post" is in effect once more. Needless to say - most everyone has taken off. - I was in town last night for awhile - hunted me up a good steak dinner and a movie. - Today I have a bunch of letters to catch up with so think I will remain in camp - going to the post movie and café after awhile.

Pop, to give you an idea of the ranches out here. - I was talking to a man last night who was in town for the election (yes. - we've just had a big state & county election!). He just got thru one in Oklahoma and now Texas!). He was a rancher and when I asked him the size - he replied, "Oh, I haven't a very big one - it's just $13\frac{1}{2}$ sections!" - For your benefit - a section is part of the way the country west of the Miss. is laid off in surveying it. - and a section is the smallest whole unit - one mile square or 640 acres - now that times $13\frac{1}{2}$ gives you an idea of a small ranch! (I knew my surveying would be useful some day!)

Do you know anything about "hay-fever" Ma? - I bet you been wondering whether its hit me or not, haven't you? - Hell, - so far - not a sign of it - but I still have my fingers crossed! I figure that by this time I should have some symptoms of it, if at all.

And besides - with it so hot out here - the season should have been much earlier than it used to be in D.C. - shouldn't it. Noticed people wearing these contraptions that fit in your nose when we first reached town 3 weeks ago - but many a sneeze - except those due to dust. - Besides. - with everything so dry around these parts - I wonder if it grows - tho I have seen articles in the paper about pulling up the saguaro. So far, I've seen nothing 'cept cactus and mesquite trees! -

Have been real lucky this last week - it's rained most every day ^(most unusual) this week - just enough to keep the ground too wet for drilling!!! It hasn't made any difference other-wise for we are flying instruments anyhow - so our flying on the most part has kept up. - Our ground school is lots easier here in a way. - While we have to dig in plenty - the courses are presented more as a lecture so things you don't grasp so readily are lots easier to follow. - We really couldn't do it otherwise in our allotted time. If we did it as in Chickasha - they would have to give us a few more hours in each day! And we have enough now. - Did I tell you that besides being on the 24 hr clock, we also use "Greenwich time" in our flying. - Take for instance - 3 o'clock in the afternoon is 15:00 o'clock, but if we are flying there and have to enter the time in our form - we would put Greenwich time or 20 o'clock! - You figure it out.

We had our pictures taken again the other day - for a class-book here at Basic. - I'm beginning to see the commercialized view point of this thing!

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Haven't seen the proofs yet. - Also - was scheduled for a picture this morning, but was rained out. - The public relations branch of the Army takes pictures & writes stories & stuff to keep up the public's interest. - They have us sorted out according to our home towns and apparently will send these pictures to the local papers for propaganda purposes - so don't be surprised some time to see me bearing 'atcha' - I'll let you know if & when they take them though.

Guess next week we will start some of our night flying - or cross country flights. - we have several of varying distances to take, and I think the last one before we leave here is a triangular course covering a little more than 900 miles - that one in particular is taken at night! - You can see - we don't sit idle. It would have taken me years as a civilian flier to have gotten the stuff we already had - not to mention what's to come. An officer told us the other day he was glad he got his wings awhile back - ~~that~~ we are covering more ground, faster, than they had to. - But that again is probably a lot of talk, too.

Who do you think I ran into the other day? Do you remember this boy "Uncle Owen" who lived on the 13 hundred block of Fairmont Street - he was more a friend of Henry's than mine. - Well, anyhow, I went for some "link instructions" the other day and ran into him! - He is a link instructor and was inducted in the Army last Sept. 9th! - We had a good talk - and needless to say - I passed my lesson for the day! - He will try to get together

some time on open post. - He is a corporal so being an enlisted man - he can go and come as he likes after working hours. He says he might be transferred soon to the new school they are opening for bombardiers on the other side of San Angelo.

- Hell. - I seem to be capable of just tearing along one page after another, - but will stop now and work on the rest of my scarce correspondence. Gotta write my instructor at Chickasha.

Got a letter from Lewis & Nance today - they say the baby has 4 teeth now, and seems to be getting along swell. - Lewis' brother has been real sick - got sun struck and turned into all sort of complications and will be out of unable to work for some time.

~~Frater~~ (Never mind - I'll save it) -

How is Janet enjoying her visit? - I know I needn't ask how you are enjoying it! - Has Florence come back yet? - O.K. - I'll really stop now!

Love,
Frank